

OUR VOICE



JUSTICE NOT WAR

NO MORE INNOCENT VICTIMS

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in our society while
communicating their issues to the
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A - OK!

Top Marks for E-town's A-Channel

Among television stations in
Edmonton, one in particular
has excelled in it's support of
the city and its various com-
munities. From shows like "Wired,"
showcasing both provincial and local
arts scenes, to its various news pro-
grams, A-Channel has set a standard
that leaves other local television sta-
tions lagging behind.

Of particular interest is "The Big
Breakfast" morning show. It would be
odd for any of the local charity organi-
zations, from the Bissell Centre to the
Salvation Army, not to receive a visit
from Steve Antle and his camera crew
when their need is greatest.

The hosts of the Big Breakfast, Mark
Scholz and Steve Antle, have consis-
tently brought to the attention of their
audience the efforts of those individu-
als and organizations that serve the
less fortunate.

Though Mr. Scholz and Mr. Antle
are the most recognized individuals of
this well-regarded community effort,
there is a group of individuals who, for
the most part, go unnoticed. Our Voice

felt it would be fun and informative to
see these people at work and observe
first hand their efforts and contribution
to Edmonton's most popular and
informative morning show.

I called ahead to the Big Breakfast
Senior Producer Don Marcotte to book
an appointment. "Come on down
Tuesday," his voice beamed through the
phone, "We'll welcome you with open
arms." Not being a touchy-feely guy, I
prayed he wasn't being literal.

I was let into the A-Channel studios
by Cody Emslie, the Big Breakfast ENG
Camera Operator. He's the guy who
gets those close-ups of the side of Mark
Scholz's face. I can only assume this is
a good thing. Emslie, I found, has over
26 years experience in television,
starting on the late David Stienburg
Show wrapping cords. Jovial and
friendly, he occasionally grins and gig-
gles at conversation he hears over his
headset. "The one thing this crew has,"
he informs me, "is a good sense of
humour."

As Mr. Emslie, the Floor Director,
Nouell Malacad, and the other camera

man, Shane Blyan, prepare to start the
show, Kelly Banks introduces herself to
me. Ms. Banks is both the Associate
Producer of the Big Breakfast and the
Director for News at Breakfast.

Ms. Banks, having no knowledge of
my previous encounters with complex
electrical equipment, offers to let me sit
in the control room for part of the
broadcast. Silently vowing and praying
to not screw something up, I follow her
to the nerve centre of the operation, a
room filled with computers, control
boards and video screens.

Ian Hunter, the Audio Tech, is
friendly and gregarious and responsi-
ble for all the background sounds and
music you hear during the program-
ming. He looked familiar, and I soon
found out that he also does sound at
The HighRun Club.

On Graphics, those words that
appear on screen alongside news
footage and talking heads, is local boy
and NAIT graduate, Shaun McDonald.
"There's never a dull moment around
here" he proclaims and then proves it
by rushing upstairs at one point to e-
mail a required font to his station.

Don Marcotte, the Senior Producer,
moves around both verbally and physi-
cally at a pace I don't envy. Making
last minute location decisions, arrang-
ing interviews and appointments min-
utes before air time, the man is literally
all over the place.

As show time hits, everything runs
surprisingly smoothly. The control room
banter and organization are a credit to
the professionalism of its crew.

Alison Crawford, the Associate
Producer and Production Assistant,
asks me what I am doing there. So I
risk fouling up the works, leave my
chair to shake hands, tell her and then
thank her for the show's support of
charity work. "Most of us here have
been 'with-out'" she replies. "That's why
(those stories are) close to our hearts."

Stu Kress, the Video Operator, backs
up Ms. Crawford's statement with one
of his own. "This is a terrific show that
way. There is a lot of community input

and that's important for a city."

The worst job, as I see it, in the con-
trol room is held by Jason Carton, the
Production Switcher. Any foul-ups in
the transmissions over the air, like, say,
instead of airing Steve Antle's interview
airing a shot of Mark Scholz scratching
himself, is his fault. It's also the only
job in the room I would want for pre-
cisely that reason.

I move between the floor, where the
show is shot and the control room at
will, drinking more than my share of
coffee. I didn't trust myself to get up
that early, so instead I just stayed up
all night to make sure I was at the stu-
dio on time. Caffeine and the fear of
recking something is all that keeps me
on my feet.

At one point I stop to talk to Diane,
the receptionist. Lack of sleep causes
the most obvious question to exit my
mouth. "What do you do here?"

"I go insane," Diane tells me.

"See that guy," Diane whispers
pointing at Nouell Malacad, "he's
insane too." I glance at her incredu-
lously.

"You just haven't seen his red
shoes," he responds to my look. I
glance at Mr. Malacad's footwear and
am inclined to agree.

After nine o'clock I get a chance to
talk to Mr. Marcotte. Having been in
the business for 25 years, Mr. Marcotte
cheerfully views his job as a total
adventure. I pose the question of how
they decide on their segments.

"The whole production staff helps
with that. We sit round the table brain
storming for ideas that would be inter-
esting and informative. Mark (Scholz)
is particularly good for that. We find
what works is if we can ask ourselves:
Did we learn something? I'm more
interested in the process than the fin-
ished product myself. I'm more inter-
ested how the soup got in the can than
the can of soup," and I can't help but
agree. After all, that's how I came to be
here in the first place.

Dave Dutton Fraser

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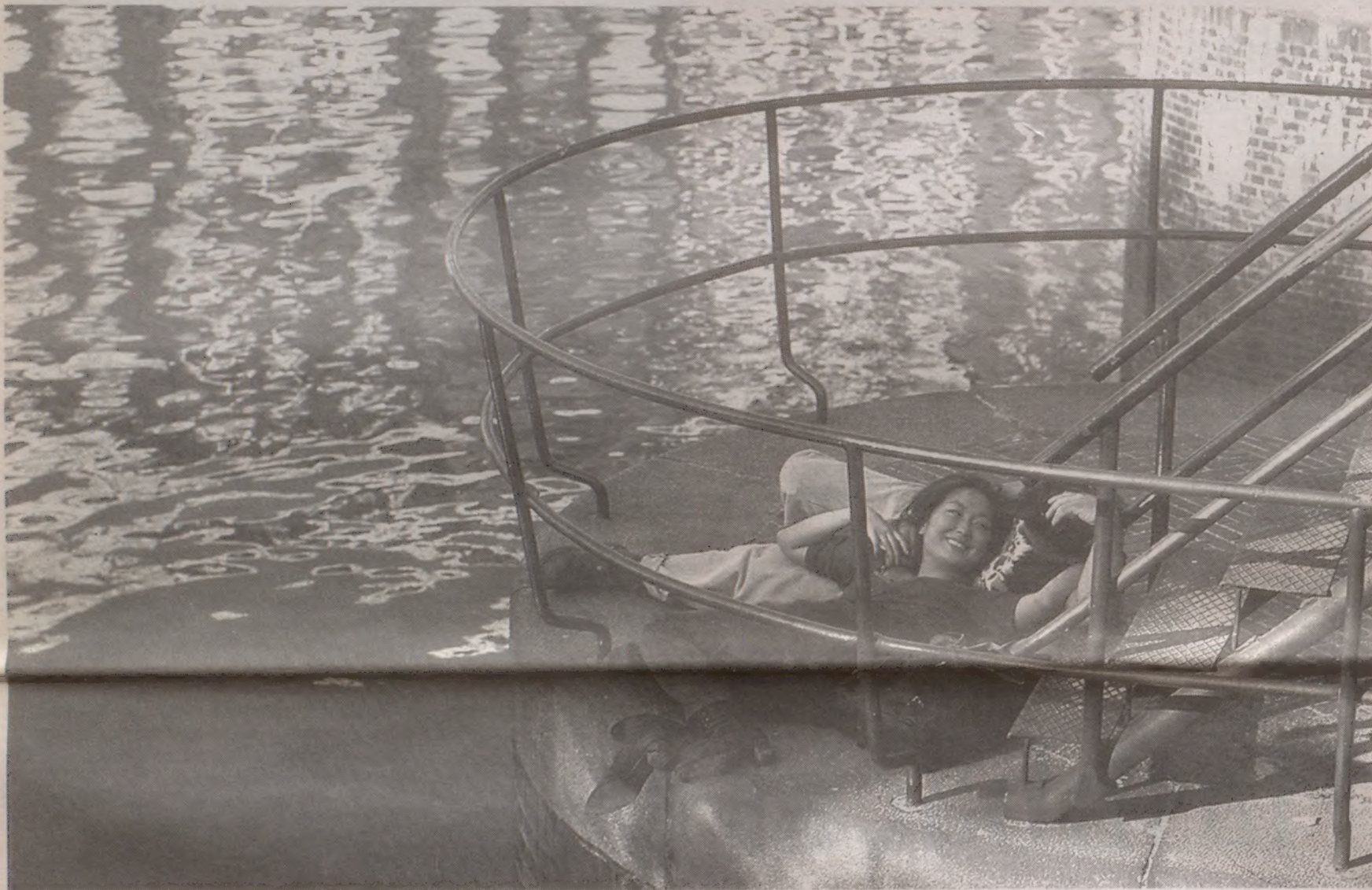
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Blood in the Pulse of the Heart

Photo: Pieter de Vos



HEART **H**

Our heart glows, and secret unrest gnaws at the root of our being... Dealing with the unconscious has become a question of life for us.

CARL JUNG

Thus it is that you sense Time, and it initiates you into its highest mystery. You come to feel Time's rhythm, now rushing on, now withdrawing. Under the form of the future it approaches you, overwhelms you, bestows on you an immeasurable bounty; but it also robs you and demands that you give everything. It wants you to be at once rich and poor, ever richer and ever poorer. It wants you to be more loving. And if you were once to follow wholeheartedly the law and imperative of your very being, if you were once fully yourself, you would live solely on this gift that flows out of you (this gift which you yourself are), and you would do this by giving it away in turn, in holiness without having defiled it through possessiveness. Your life would be like breath itself, like the lungs' calm and unconscious double movement. And you yourself would be the air drawn in and exhaled with the changing measure of the tides. You would be the blood in the pulse of the Heart that takes you in and expels you and keeps you captive in the circulation and spell of its veins.

You have sensed Time and yet have not sensed the Heart? You feel the stream of grace that rushes into you, warm and red, and yet have not felt how you are loved?

Your life would be like breath itself, like the lungs' calm and unconscious double movement. And you yourself would be the air drawn in and exhaled with the changing measure of the tides.

You seek for a proof, and yet you yourself are that proof. You seek to entrap him, the Unknown One, in the mesh of your knowledge, and yet you yourself are entrapped in the inescapable net of his might. You would like to grasp, but you yourself are already grasped. You would like to overpower and yourself are being overpowered. You pretend to be seeking, but you have long (and for all time) been found. Through a thousand garments you feel your way to a living body, and yet you insist you cannot feel the hand that nakedly touches your bare soul? You jerk about in the haste of your unquiet heart and call it religion, when in truth these are the convulsions of a fish struggling on the shipboard. You would like to find God even though it be with a thousand sorrows: What humiliation that your efforts were but an empty fuss, since he has long held you in his hand. Put your finger to the living pulse of Being. Feel the throbbing that in one single act of creation at once claims you and leaves you free. Feel the throbbing that, in the tremendous outpouring of existence, at the same time determines the precise measure of distance: how you ought to love him as your most intimate friend and how you ought to fall down before him as the all-high Lord; how in one and the same act he

clothes you out of love and strips you out of love; how, along with existence, he presses all treasures into your hand, and the most precious jewel of all, to love him in return; and how he nevertheless (not afterward, in a second movement, in a further step) again takes away everything he has given you so that you love not the gift but the giver and so that you know, even in giving, that you are but a wave in his stream. In the same split instance of existence you are near and far; in the same moment a friend and a master are set before you. In the same moment you are child and slave. You will never go beyond this first state of things. In eternity you will live as that which you have been. For, even if your virtue, your wisdom, your love towered immeasurably, even if you were to grow beyond men and angels straight to the highest heaven; even then you would never leave your point of departure. Yet nothing is more blessed than this first movement, and would that on the longest arc of development you would be constantly curving back to this marvel of your origin! For love's full reality is inconceivably glorious.

*Excerpt from Heart of the World
Hans Urs Von Balthasar*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



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Weasel Words

Reading Between the Lines

L LETTER

I have owed you this letter for a very long time—but my fingers have avoided the pencil as though it were an old and poisoned tool.

JOHN STEINBECK

It's very often necessary to read "between the lines" of news articles to find the "truth" based on what ISN'T printed. The heavily implied information in those "white spaces" is usually very different from the conclusion the writer is trying to lead us to.

I regret to say that O.V. prints articles of this nature no more or less than any other magazine or newspaper. The most recent best (or worst) example of that, is to be found on page nine of the January edition, where Tom Hind describes his 32 day stay in Edmonton's Remand Centre.

The conclusion he's successfully leading us to is that the Remand is a hell of a place to be, where inmates suffer from constant verbal/emotional abuse, borderline malnutrition, and mild torture. (sleep/heat deprivation)

The lesson I see him trying to teach us is just how evil and bad our present Provincial Govt/society is in allowing and/or encouraging this to happen.

But I think I smell another lesson written "between the lines" that Tom Hind is evading. He doesn't seem to be able to own up to the fact that he CHOSE to be stupid, and do something dumb enough to get him into that hell to begin with. And if that's the case, I won't be braindead enough to feel one damn bit sorry for him.

I smell this evasion because while he devotes 95% of his article to what a hell the Remand is, he only gives us two lines on what he did to get himself there to begin with.

Weasel-worded descriptions like "A prank I pulled went a strange way—it went up in flames" and "long story short—I was taken to the cop shop and booked" tell us nothing Tom. Tell us what you did, so WE can decide whether you're a victim persecuted for righteousness sake, or just a fool who got what he deserved.

Ed Frey

Flashbacks

Mr. Justice Holmes's speech at the Harvard Law School dinner, New York, February 15, 1913.

If I am right it will be a slow business for our people to reach rational views, assuming that we are allowed to work peacefully to that end. But as I grow older I grow calm. If I feel what are perhaps an old man's apprehensions, that competition from new races will cut deeper than working men's disputes and will test whether we can hang together and can fight; if I fear that we are running through the world's resources at a pace that we cannot keep; I do not lose my hopes. I do not pin my dreams for the future to my country or even to my race. I think it probable that civilization somehow will last as long as I care to look ahead—perhaps with smaller numbers, but perhaps also bred to greatness and splendor by science. I think it not improbable that man, like the grub that prepares a chamber for the winged thing it never has seen but is to be—that man may have cosmic destinies that he does not understand. And so beyond the vision of battling races and an impoverished earth I catch a dreaming glimpse of peace.

The other day my dream was pictured to my mind. I was walking homeward on Pennsylvania Avenue near the Treasury,

and as I looked beyond Sherman's statue to the west the sky was aflame with scarlet and crimson from the setting sun. But, like the note of downfall in Wagner's opera, below the skyline there came from little globes the pallid discord of the electric lights. And I thought to myself the Götterdämmerung [A turbulent ending of a regime or an institution; a collapse (as of a society or regime) marked by catastrophic violence and disorder] will end, and from those globes clustered like evil eggs will come the new masters of the sky. It is like the time in which we live. But then I remembered the faith that I partly have expressed, faith in a universe not measured by our fears, a universe that has thought and more than thought inside of it, and as I gazed, after the sunset and above the electric lights, there shone the stars.

The Revd Sydney Smith to Mrs Meynell, February 12, 1821.

Let me beg of you to take more care of those beautiful geraniums, and not let the pigs in upon them. Geranium-fed bacon is of a beautiful colour; but it takes so many plants to fatten one pig, that such a system can never answer. I cannot conceive who put it into your head. God bless you.



Photo: Russell Timmerman

Doing Life

The barriers that people face coming out of prison are increasingly frustrating. Some people have the notion that certain people need to be locked for years at a time, that this will teach them a lesson. The truth is that locking someone up and throwing away the key is not the answer. When people come out of jail, they may be at a greater risk from spending so much time being isolated from society. I am not condoning crime, or saying that people do not need to take responsibility for their actions. We as a society should be leaning toward a rehabilitation model. Although the paradigm has shifted, men and women who try to reintegrate back into society are faced with barriers.

Men and women with a criminal record experience difficulty finding gainful employment. Some companies are reluctant to hire someone who has committed a crime. It is difficult to pursue a career in the medical field if someone has drug charges.

The barriers are not only limited to employment. Education is difficult to pursue because most institutions require tuition or payment for courses. Most men and women who have served time do not have a steady income. Most people sell drugs for the money or to feed an addiction. Employment skills are not at the top of the list.

Addiction is something so powerful that it can ruin families, children, and even takes lives. Addiction has a very destructive path. Overcoming one takes a lot of healing, something that all institutions do not incorporate.

Being released from prison can be a difficult transition. Men and women are told when they can do certain things, when and

where they can move, and sometimes they are told when they will be ready to leave. This creates anxiety and a lack of life skills. When in prison, people feel isolated from society and this inhibits them from making positive choices in their lives. If the choice is school for three months or work the streets and deal drugs for money, the latter will be used.

We as a community need to take more responsibility for the people around us. More tolerance is needed for the addict who sells her body for drugs. Rehabilitation is the key for people to become contributing members of society. Without our help, these people will eventually die and pass their lifestyles onto their children. The cycle will continue.

Wanda Gorician

A Pure Spin

Many thanks for the article in the January 2003 edition of *Our Voice* on the current situation in Venezuela. *Our Voice* continues to impress me in its regular coverage; reading this article in print, however, raises my opinion even higher. I have been trying to follow the political problems in Venezuela since the current crisis began; mainstream media presents pure spin for the opposition to Chavez' fairly elected government. Even resorting to on-line sources, I have yet to read a single article as concise and unbiased as that of Gregory Wilpert. *Our Voice* deserves many accolades for the common dissemination of such difficult to find information.

Jay Smith

"Opinions-a-plenty"

EDITORIAL

OPINION

Photo: Pieter de Vos



Mackey under his breath.

But Mrs. O'Connell and Miss Barry don't know what it's like in the lane when you knock on a door and someone says come in and you go in and there's no light and there's a pile of rags in the corner saying who is it and you say telegram and the pile of rags tells you would you ever go to the shop for me I'm starving with the hunger and I'd give my two eyes for a cup of tea and what are you going to do say I'm busy and ride off on your bike and leave the pile of rags there with the telegram money that's pure useless because the pile of rags is helpless to get out of bed to go to the post office to cash the bloody money order.

What are you supposed to do?

You're told never never go to the post office to cash one of those money orders for anyone or you'll lose your job forever. But what are you supposed to do when an old man that was in the Boer War hundreds of years ago says his legs are gone and he'd be forever grateful if you'd go to Paddy Considine in the post office and tell him the situation and Paddy will surely cash the money order and keep two shillings for yourself grand boy that you are. Paddy Considine says no bother but don't tell anyone or I'd be out on my arse and so would you, son. The old man from the Boer War says he knows you have telegrams to deliver now but would you ever come back tonight and maybe go to the shop for him for he doesn't have a thing in the house and he's freezing on top of it. He sits in an old armchair in the corner covered with bits of blankets and a bucket behind the chair that stinks enough to make you sick and when you look at that old man in the corner you want to get a hose with hot water and strip him and wash him down and give him a big feed of rashers and eggs and mashed potatoes with loads of butter salt and onions.

I want to take the man from the Boer War and the pile of rags in the bed and put them in a big sunny house in the country with birds chirping outside the window and a stream gurgling.

Mrs. Spillane in Pump Lane off Carey's Road has two crippled twin children with big blond heads, small bodies, and bits of

legs that dangle over the edges of chairs. They look into the fire all day and say, Where's Daddy? They speak English like everyone else but they babble away to one another in a language they made up, Hung sup tea sup hung. Mrs. Spillane says that means when are we going to get our supper? She tells me she's lucky if her husband sends four pounds a month and she's beside herself with the abuse she gets from the Dispensary over him being in England. The children are only four and they're very bright even if they can't walk or take care of themselves. If they could walk, if they were in any way normal, she would pack up and move to England out of this godforsaken country that fought so long for freedom and look at the state of us, De Valera in his mansion above in Dublin the dirty oul' bastard and the rest of the politicians that can all go to hell, God forgive me. The priests can go to hell, too and I won't ask God to forgive me for saying the likes of that. There they are, the priest and nuns telling us Jesus was poor and 'tis no shame, lorries driving up to their houses with crates and barrels of whiskey and wine, eggs galore and legs of ham and they telling us what we should give up for Lent. Lent, my arse. What are we going to give up when we have Lent all year long?

I want to take Mrs. Spillane and her two blond cripple children and put them in that house in the country with the pile of rags and the man from the Boer War and wash everyone and let them all sit in the sun with the birds singing and the streams gurgling.

I can't leave the pile of rags alone with a useless money order because the pile is an old woman, Mrs. Gertrude Daly, all twisted with every class of disease you can get in a Limerick lane, arthritis, rheumatism, falling hair, a nostril half gone from her jabbing at it with her finger, and you wonder what kind of world it is when this old woman sits up from the rags and smiles at you with teeth that gleam white in the dark, her own teeth and perfect."

Excerpt from *Angela's Ashes*
By Frank McCourt

EDITOR **E**

It was an interesting experience being metropolitan **editor** of the Times, in precisely the same way as being simmered in a saucepan for a few years is terribly interesting.

A M ROSENTHAL,
EXECUTIVE EDITOR,
NY TIMES

What are you supposed to do?

"Mrs. O'Connell and Miss Barry at the post office tell us every day our job is to deliver telegrams and nothing else. We are not to be

doing things for people, going to the shop for groceries or any other kind of message. They don't care if people are dying in bed. They don't care if people are legless, lunatic or crawling on the floor. We are to deliver the telegram and that's all. Mrs. O'Connell says, I know everything ye do, everything, for the people of Limerick have their eye on ye and there are reports which have here in my drawers.

A fine place to keep reports, says Toby

Peace ConvergenceZone

Build the anti-war movement in an attempt to silence the drums of war.

Despite the intense global opposition to the war on Iraq, the Bush and Blair administrations continue to beat the drums of war. We need to be prepared to act if they do.

Peace Convergence Zone - In the event of a

"dramatic" escalation of events (such as the invasion of Iraq), Edmonton Coalition Against War and Racism is calling for people in our city to converge at CANADA PLACE (corner of 97th Avenue and Jasper Avenue) at 5PM the day of such an event, in spontaneous protest against the war.

See you on February 15 in the next GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION against the war on Iraq. In Edmonton, we will be meeting at Churchill Square (corner of 100 Street and 102A Avenue) at 1 PM for a downtown peace march. We must continue to build the anti-war movement in an attempt to silence the

drums of war. Together - we can stop this war!

For more information, contact Lisa and Paul Jensen-Hengstler: lisaandpaul@compusmart.ab.ca

No Clipboards

How do you find the common interests and needs of such a diverse, disemboweled and fragile group? Very tactfully, carefully, subtly, and with no clipboards...

K KITCHEN

McDonald's is a reductive kitchen for a classless culture that hasn't time to dally on its way to the next rainbow's end.

TOM ROBBINS

How do you even find out about the social and economic concerns of a neighborhood with individuals from forty different countries speaking twenty different languages? Some of these individuals are fleeing very harsh and repressive regimes in their country of origin. Some bring the hatreds from their old country into the new. Ninety percent are living in rental housing with an unemployment rate of 16.9% to 20.8% they have the lowest income levels in any community in Edmonton, with a median family income of \$21,000.

In Queen Mary and Central McDougall, west of 101 Street to the graveyard centered on the Avenue of Nations, 107th Avenue, everyone is a minority, even those few left-over WASPs in the single family dwellings on the outskirts to the north. How do you find the common interests and needs of such a diverse, disemboweled and fragile group? Very tactfully, carefully, subtly, and with no clipboards, Emil van der Poorten, Project Coordinator of Immigrant Neighborhoods Community Planning Association (I.N.C.P.A.), an initiative of the Queen Mary and Central McDougall Community Action Coalition, tells us.

The Community Action Coalition (C.A.C.) mobilized the community to forestall the closing of John A. McDougall

School in 2001. The I.N.C.P.A. emerged as a purely volunteer organization to respond to the emergence of blatant racism in the neighborhood in 1991 and was responsible for the creation of the Central Edmonton Community Land Trust, which has restored 22 houses for low-income families in Central Edmonton. They became a registered society in 1999.

Now, with funding from Health Canada and the Justice Department, these two groups are collaborating on neighborhood projects to improve the quality of life for people in this neighborhood. These projects were developed with a lot of local input gathered at neighborhood gatherings such as the Icicle Fest and Spring and Summer Community gatherings and at a more formal "Planning Our Future" Discussion held in December of 2001. The community concerns that were prioritized in these meetings were food security and nutrition information, healthy lifestyles, affordable housing, and personal safety. The P.L.A.Y. Project has two main outreach components on stream now. The first addresses nutrition issues.

How do people with barely enough income to pay rent feed themselves in a place where they are not comfortable with the language, and do not even know where to buy things they recognize as food? The P.L.A.Y. Project Community Kitchen, coordinated by Rainbow McBryan, a Nutritionist, and aided by a Registered Dietitian, Joy Luke, is looking for volunteer facilitators in the community to head up small Cultural Kitchens which will help educate new immigrants in ways to use foods readily available and inexpensive in Canadian markets in their own cuisine and to recognize and use the variety of foods recommended by the Canada Food Guide. They also hope to start Multicultural Kitchens, which will bring together people of many ethnic origins to share the richness of their national cuisine with each other.

Community Kitchens are a learning tool. A group of individuals gets together to prepare a meal, share recipes and connect as

neighbors and stakeholders in their community. The hope is that these participants, with the help of the P.L.A.Y. Project and with support from the Food Bank will wish to go on to form Collective Kitchens, either cultural or multicultural, and collective food buying clubs specializing in bulk purchases of ingredients for ethnic dishes. Collective Kitchens are a group of people who, in low income situations, can apply for and get food from the Food Bank, combine this with a small per session fee from their own money for ingredients like meat and condiments they cannot get from the Food Bank and put it all together to construct a number of nutritious meals they can take home and store in the freezer. It is a very effective way of utilizing scarce resources both public and private of time, money and food.

Ms. McBryan already hosts a small collective kitchen for the many students from Nait, Grant MacEwan and the U of A who also live in the neighborhood, with the aid of Action for Healthy Communities. She hopes to find the people she needs and to have the first P.L.A.Y. project Community Kitchen operating out of the renovated John A. McDougall School early this spring. For more information about this project, phone 413-0699 or e-mail rmcbryan@ualberta.ca

The second I.N.C.P.A. Project, New Directions for Youth, addresses the problem of street violence in a proactive way by trying to engage youngsters of the community in activities ranging from sports, arts, drama and multicultural activities before they polarize into the mutually antagonistic ethnic youth gangs that are becoming a feature of many other low income neighborhoods in Edmonton.

Christian Durand, Coordinator for this project, brings his experiences in working with youth in similar community development projects in Cuba and Ecuador. He is in the process of networking with the existing cultural brokers in the community and the local schools, service clubs and other organizations such

as Immigrant Youth in Millwoods. Here also the emphasis is on maximizing the resources available in a way that is easy for people who are not too familiar with the area, the culture or the language to access by building partnerships with the whole community.

One of the aims of this project is to foster in children a pride in their own culture, a tolerance for other cultures and to mitigate that overwhelming Americanization of youth that is affecting any child with access to a TV in this country. The target age of youth for this project is 8 to 16. Anyone with a passion for youth issues who would like to contribute feedback, expertise and help to this project is invited to be part of the Learning Team who is putting this project together. Contact Christian Durand at 413-0699.

Other initiatives of the C.A.C. and the I.N.C.P.A. are working on include developing a brochure in simple effective English with translations into many other languages describing the project and distributing it in the neighborhood, creating a multicultural cookbook, and opening a resource center where people can drop in and find what resources are available in the neighborhood to enhance their quality of life. Emil pointed out to me that even knowing that there is a toll free number for every government office in the province is a helpful bit of information for people who have to watch every penny and quite often have to contact the government on a regular basis.

Very tactfully, carefully, subtly, and with no clipboards, these organizations are doing what is doable in their neighborhood, starting with very simple, basic stuff. For anyone who is interested in being part of this process, there will be a C.A.C. meeting in the John A. McDougall (107 St. and 109 Ave.) Staff Dining Room on February 6th at 7:30. For more information call Emil 421-1867 or incpac@edmc.net

Theresa McBryan

Patches' Journal

October 16, 2002

I've made unrealistic demands on myself when I think I should take all that I have learned and make myself better. And when I can't make myself better I give up the fight. If I can't do it alone, how can I expect others to help me. I'm nothing but a quitter so why do I keep trying to change? Why?

October 17, 2002

It's 3:00 AM and I can't sleep. Another 24 hours has begun and I still don't know what I am all about. It's hard to concentrate because of all the jumbled, disconnected

thoughts that fly around in my brain. DIE! FAILURE! WORTHLESS! CIPHER.....disjointed, unfinished thoughts go through my head. Some good, some bad and a lot that don't make any sense at all.

What is life?....I don't have a clue. What is death?...It is my destiny. Death is what I have chased since I was a child. Why? I'll never tell.

No one cares if I live or die. Why should anybody care when I myself couldn't care less. When did I stop caring? All I seem to want is death. I just want out. I'm so sick and tired of this empty feeling that I've lived with all my life.

Everything would be okay if I could fill this void that lingers somewhere inside of my heart. A void without a beginning or

end. I've tried all kinds of chemicals/liquids to fill it and yet, it still gnaws at my soul. There ain't anymore chemicals/liquids that I haven't tried - that I know of. I've tried everything and nothing has worked. What is left?

I did find something that filled that void, but I ran away from it. I couldn't handle all that happiness. I waited for something to go bad and nothing happened. There were good days and bad days, but even then my bad days were good. Of course, I quit going to church and started running again. Life was too good to be true, so I ran.

Today, I can't find a reason to live. I guess I'll find something that's worth living for, someday, if I live long enough. I feel so empty. So, so empty. Dark despair runs

through every fibre of my being. Misery is my constant companion, along with this forlorn emptiness...

My thinking process is to disjointed that I can't finish/explain what's happening in my head. My thoughts are everywhere at the same time. All I know is I feel so empty. If I had the guts I'd end it all.

October 18, 2002

A wise man changes his mind, a fool never will. Some days I wonder if this wounded bird will ever fly and other days I just don't care.

Feed the Hungry Children

With one in four children living in poverty, the need for nutritious food served at schools is greater than ever. To help meet this need the Edmonton City Centre Church Corporation (ECCCC) helps to fund a snack program and a school lunch program. There are also a number of city schools that have started their own breakfast programs.

Jasmin Hoebein, program manager for the Snack Program and the School Lunch Program said their primary goal is to alleviate short-term hunger. "We'd like to work ourselves out of a job, but unfortunately families don't have the means to do it."

Back in 1975, the Nutrition Snack Program kicked off based on the results of a study conducted by home economists on the effects of a snack on inner city children who did not regularly eat breakfast due to poverty or lack of nutritional knowledge. The study's early results were very encouraging. They showed improved motivation and ability to concentrate in the children who received snacks. This led Steve Ramsankar, former principal of Alex Taylor School, to approach the ECCCC to continue and expand the program started by the home economists.

Doris Usher, an ECCCC volunteer and a public health nurse co-ordinated the program in both Alex Taylor and St. Michael Schools. She worked with volunteers, mostly parents, providing them with information on hygiene, purchasing and preparing food.

Six hundred children participated in the snack program that first year.

Feedback on the snack program was so positive that several other schools asked to join. Usher visited these schools and the snack program expanded.

By 1977 more funding was needed to meet the growing number of children on the snack program. At that time the average cost was 10 cents per snack per child, even though the snacks were kept simple – a half an apple, a carrot stick, a slice of melon or a cup of milk or juice. Funding was sought from businesses and charitable foundations.

By 1987 the Nutrition Snack Program had grown to include 16 schools on a budget of \$49,000. The results of the program continued to be positive. Teachers said the children were better able to concentrate, disruptive behaviors lessened, and the attitudes of the students improved.

The snack program is now in 33 elementary schools, serving over 6000 children at a cost of \$184,500 for this year. All schools participating receive funding of 15 cents per snack per child. They are also able to get food from the Edmonton Food Bank to supplement their snacks. The snacks are prepared and served five days a week. Snack co-ordinators, parent volunteers, teacher assistants and teachers prepare the snacks.

Money for the snack program is raised through service clubs, donations, unions and corporations. No government funding is involved.

Since the Nutrition Snack Program start-

ed 25 years ago in two inner city schools, the need has increased rather than less. Ten years ago, a second program, the Edmonton School Lunch Program, was started by the Child Poverty Action Group (now disbanded) as a complementary program to the Snack program because so many children were going to school hungry. Schools determined to be on the high needs list were put on the program. At first, most of them were in inner city schools, but now Hoebein said she is receiving calls from schools in Mill Woods and the west end of Edmonton requesting the school lunch program.

"There has certainly been an increased need in the seven years I've been here," said Hoebein. More schools are asking to come on line than we can take on. We need more sustainable funding."

There are now fourteen schools with a total of 2300 children receiving noon meals. The budget for this year is about 1.5 million. Money collected from parents comes to about \$75,000, the government pays one third, the city of Edmonton puts in \$100,000, and ECCCC fundraises to meet the balance of the cost. To add another school to the program costs about \$10,000 for dishes, cutlery and other.

Unlike the snack program, the school lunch program has a paid staff who serve the meals. The meals are prepared and delivered to the schools by the Misericordia and Edmonton General Hospitals who deliver them at a cost of \$2.15 per meal per child. Caregivers of children on the school

lunch program are asked to pay \$1 per meal per child or as much as they can afford. Regardless of whether payment is made the children receive their lunch. To ensure privacy for those who cannot pay, an envelope with the child's name is sent home with a blank one inside. The child brings back the envelopes with the money in the blank envelope. Once the two envelopes are separated and the blank ones piled together, not even the teachers know who paid and who didn't.

The Snack Program and the Edmonton School Lunch Program both serve children from kindergarten to Grade 6. In 2001, a pilot Breakfast Club was begun by the Nutrition Snack Program at Balwin Junior High School to provide breakfast for junior high students. A variety of breakfast items are made available to them before classes.

Hoebein said: "The reason they came on line is there is a gap between elementary and high school. Teachers report the students are more alert and better able to concentrate in class when they have breakfast."

In addition to the programs funded through ECCCC, there are also some schools that have their own breakfast clubs funded by donations directly to the schools. St. Michael and Sacred Heart Catholic Elementary Schools both serve breakfast before classes every morning. Children attend on a drop-in basis, and receive a balanced breakfast.

Linda Dumont

FOOD **F**

If food is poetry, is not poetry also food?

JOYCE CAROL OATES

Rivers of the Heart

Standing alone, the darkness
surrounds...

Pain echoes inside me,
thunderous sounds.
Beaten and battered,
all alone so it seemed.
Where had my life gone,
where were my dreams?

I'd lost all ambition, I'd lost so so much.
Solutions not working, no golden touch.
I wasn't like others, but where did I fit?
Would I be lonely, if I truly quit?

A point of surrender,
the end of the road..

Who could I turn to lighten the load?

I opened my mouth, the words
just came out...

Please help me find answers,
solutions I doubt.

Yet there were the people,
bright shiny and clean..

Their faces most smiling,
their eyes had a gleen.

Why would they help me, what
would they say?

They told me to follow,
they'd show me the way

Tom R. - Racine, WI.

can be anything and it affects people in different ways. The drug that affected me was alcohol. The whole thing about alcohol is it does not have a pick of colors of skin. It does not have a choice of age or sex. If a person drinks everyday then they may have a problem.

There have been a few times when the disease of alcoholism made me question myself. That's when I'd see the people who care for me. They are the ones who know me and kick my butt when needed. The whole thing of having friends is they are there when I'm at my shortest end.

Let's take, for example, when I was at my wit's end with staying sober and really needed a drink. All I had to do was look on the inside and the bottle was put away. I send out prayers for all the people still dying and a thank-you to the Creator.

The devotion it takes to stay sober is fought a day at a time with many prayers. The whole thing about prayer is that it WORKS. Somehow something always happens that is unexpected because the Creator got involved. This is one of times when I wish I had a car to help me change peoples' attitudes toward those in an alcohol stupor. I seldom pass by anyone in need; drunk or sober. I was once there and many people passed by me. I sure as hell can't do that to a fellow human being, no way. So this is what happened, and it has taught me a lesson in respect for my fellow man.

After a long day at work my body was

sore and my head ached from a fall I'd just taken. I was going along the street when I spotted an older man who lives on the street passed out in the middle of the road. There were cars trying to go around him and people were walking by him to avoid touching him. I jumped off my bike to stop the cars and helped to him to his feet. The cars were tooting their horns but I signalled to them using the one finger salute. Nobody got out of their cars and people just watched me help this older man.

I knew who he was and asked if I could take him to the Spady and he said yes. So I took him by his hand and brought my bike in the other. I took him to the Spady and told them what happened and they welcomed him inside. When I got home I was thinking about what I'd done and the next day I went to find him.

I didn't have to go far because he was going for breakfast and all I did was say hi. I didn't tell him that because of what I'd done he was still walking on this earth. This brought back the realization that sometimes the Creator is very much there when times get tough.

I don't blame the people who passed by or have any grudges against them for avoiding the older man who lives on the street. The blame lies on me for believing that I'm better than them. I have too passed by people in need because I was too busy or too focused on me.

It was all brought back that I was once

in his shoes. Funny how things tend to happen when things are going somewhat sane. I remember when people would pass by me and pay no attention. If it was not for the people who helped me get back on my feet I sure as heck wouldn't be writing this. Sometimes people need a hand because they're in trouble.

The miracle of people helping people is very strong when everyone plays a role. The little things far outdo the big stuff because it's done out of care. This article I'm writing was done in the comfort of my home and I think of others who don't even have a place to sleep. I'm one of the ones chosen to carry the message of hope and there are countless others who are doing the same. The message is loud and clear: We have a problem with poverty in our city. It does not matter if you have a problem with substances or mental health issues. Poverty is all around and it affects many people no matter what age or race. I have first-hand knowledge of what it feels like and I can't forget where I came from. I for one do more than pray at times and give a helping hand when needed on the Red Road to learning, healing and acceptance

Len Blackfox Martial

you can reach me at this
email address
len0853@yahoo.com

The world is not a very big place when friends from all over the world have the same problem - the addiction to some sort of drug. The drug

P

PEACE

Mankind must remember that **peace** is not God's gift to his creatures; peace is our gift to each other.

Elie Wiesel



Images of Protest

Saturday,
Jan. 18/2003
Edmonton

By Russell Timmerman





MOVING ON PEACE

The landmark 1960's TV ad scene of a little girl in a field of daisies is being recreated as part of a new controversial advertising campaign to put pressure on the Bush administration against rushing into war in Iraq.

The new TV ad, financed by more than 10,000 individual members of the Internet group MoveOn.org, hits the airwaves today in 13 major U.S. cities.

"Our message is simple: 'Please let the inspectors do their job,'" says Eli Pariser of MoveOn.org. "As long as the United Nations team is still hard at work there's no reason to send in our troops and unleash forces that could escalate into the overthrow of friendly governments or chemical and biological warfare or even nuclear warfare."

As in the famous TV commercial created by adman Tony Schwartz for the 1964 presidential campaign against Barry Goldwater, the new 30-second ad opens with a six-year-old girl in a flowering meadow. She pulls petals off a daisy one by one. The ad ends with the mushroom-shaped cloud of a nuclear explosion, as the anti-Goldwater ad did.

"We deliberately chose the images of the little girl and the mushroom cloud because we hope the controversy stirs up public debate," says Wes Boyd, the MoveOn.org president. "Americans ought to understand the full ramifications of war with Iraq."

The ad is airing on TV stations in Washington, DC, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Chicago, Dallas, Miami, Boston, Minneapolis, Phoenix, Cleveland, Portland and Seattle.

MoveOn.org is a key player in Win Without War, a coalition of organizations, including the National Council of Churches, NAACP, Sierra Club, NOW, and others, representing millions of Americans who favor allowing the U.N. inspectors to finish their work in Iraq.

Why this Ad?

Foreign and military policy experts have convincingly argued that a US war against Iraq is likely to lead to chaos in Iraq and the region, arouse animosity toward our country, increase the chances of terrorist attacks, and damage our economy. And, as always, war would cause great destruction and human suffering, as well as the deaths of untold Americans and innocent Iraqis. This advertisement focuses on an additional issue — an attack carries a significant risk of increasing the world's vulnerability to nuclear weapons.

A US Attack on Iraq Would Increase the Threat Posed by Weapons of Mass Destruction:

The United States claims that the threat posed by Iraqi possession of weapons of mass destruction justifies a US preventive attack. Leaving aside for the moment the deeply troubling legal and foreign policy implications of such an attack and the unsubstantiated suggestion that there is an imminent threat, an attack would increase the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction.

A US National Intelligence Estimate Concludes Saddam Hussein Unlikely To Initiate Bio/Chem Attack Unless Iraq Is Attacked:

A classified National Intelligence Estimate published last fall, which includes the views of all relevant U.S. intelligence agencies, concluded that in the absence of US military action, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is unlikely to initiate a chemical or biological attack against the United States. However, the report concluded, "should Saddam conclude that a US-led attack could no longer be deterred," he might launch a chemical-biological counterattack. Hussein might "decide that the extreme step of assisting Islamist terrorists in conducting a WMD [weapons of mass destruction] attack against the United States would be his last chance to exact vengeance by taking a large number of victims with him."

General Wesley Clark, former NATO Supreme Allied Commander Agrees:

The CIA's assessment confirms the concerns of experienced military professionals and foreign policy experts. For example, General Wesley Clark, former NATO Supreme Allied Commander, advised the Senate Armed Services Committee on September 23rd: "We do know that if we attack him, and leave him with no alternative, that he will use weapons of mass destruction, because he has nothing to lose."

General Brent Scowcroft, National Security Adviser to Presidents Ford and George H.W. Bush cites Danger of Israeli Nuclear Involvement:

Israel is clearly vulnerable. As General Brent Scowcroft, National Security Adviser under President Gerald Ford and George H. W. Bush wrote: "Israel would have to expect to

be the first casualty, as in 1991 when Saddam sought to bring Israel into the Gulf conflict. This time, using weapons of mass destruction, he might succeed, provoking Israel to respond, perhaps with nuclear weapons, unleashing an Armageddon in the Middle East."

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon Does Not Rule Out Use of Nuclear Weapons in Response to Iraqi Use of "Non-Conventional" Weapons:

Indeed, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has made it clear that Israel will retaliate with nuclear weapons if it comes under a chemical or biological attack. Sharon told the Jerusalem Post in September: "If harm is done to Israel, if we suffer casualties, or non-conventional weapons are used on us, then definitely Israel will take the proper actions to defend its citizens," using a well-understood euphemism for Israel's undeclared nuclear arsenal.

Bush Administration Expresses Willingness to Use Nuclear Weapons in Response to Bio/Chem Attack:

Or Iraq might use chemical or biological weapons on the battlefield against US troops. This scenario also calls forth the spectre of nuclear weapons. The Administration's new strategic policy explicitly emphasizes that nuclear weapons could be used to respond to chemical or biological weapons use. The Administration's policy, outlined in a document entitled "National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction," released on December 10, 2002, indicates the United States considers itself free to employ nuclear weapons if attacked with chemical or biological arms. The strategy explicitly states that the United States "reserves the right to respond with overwhelming force—including through resort to all of our options—to the use of WMD against the United States, our forces abroad, and friends and allies." Thus, according to recently proclaimed US policy, an Iraqi battlefield use (even if limited and relatively ineffective) of chemical weapons could be the trigger for an uncircumscribed nuclear retaliation. The fact that the Administration has not taken this obvious occasion to reassure the world that US would not use nuclear weapons in this conflict is significant.

British Defence Secretary Says His Country Will Do the Same:

Great Britain also has declared its willingness to use nuclear weapons in response to chemical or biological weapons use, as British Defence Secretary Geoffrey Hoon confirmed to Parliament last March. Referring to "states of concern", and Saddam Hussein in particular, Mr. Hoon told the Defence Select Committee that: "They can be absolutely confident that in the right conditions we would be willing to use our nuclear weapons."

Nuclear Proliferation:

Looking into the future, a US initiated, unprovoked war against Iraq could spur increased proliferation of nuclear weapons. Not wanting to be left defenseless in the face of such threats, some countries will respond to the aggressive Bush posture by reaching for — not rejecting — nuclear weapons.

Former US Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Chas Freeman bluntly expressed this view at a media briefing last fall. Freeman said, "Arguably, by invading Iraq, we are providing countries throughout the world with an incentive to acquire weapons of mass destruction, now that they can no longer rely on the rule of law to protect them from American bullying and invasion, or the bullying and invasion of others, following our example. The only sure deterrent they can count on is weapons of mass destruction."

This is not the kind of world we want for ourselves or for our children. Just like the so-called "controlled-burn" set by the US Forest Service in New Mexico last year, wars don't follow predictable courses and conflicts spread like wildfire. This advertisement demonstrates graphically that going to war in a tinderbox of a region, rent with conflicts, and heavily armed with both conventional and nuclear weapons, is folly.

The controversial ad began with a little girl in a field picking petals off a daisy, counting. When the count reaches ten, her image is frozen and a male voice begins a militaristic countdown. At zero, we see a nuclear explosion and hear President Johnson's voice: "These are the stakes, to make a world in which all God's children can live, or to go into the darkness. Either we must love each other or we must die." Fade to black. White lettering. "On November 3rd vote for President Johnson."

For more information: www.Moveon.org

Creating Options Aimed at Reducing Sexual Exploitation (C.O.A.R.S.E.) is an innovative court diversion program for women charged with prostitution-related offenses. It is a partnership of community organizations, government and police working to create hopeful options for women.

"This program is just one of the many solutions needed to help women end their

involvement in prostitution. It adds a new tool and builds on the good work already being done in Edmonton," says Kate Quinn, PAAFE Executive Director.

"Since 1996, men have had the option of choosing the Prostitution Offender Program if they are first time offenders. We wanted to offer a similar choice to those turning to prostitution for survival."

Forty-two women (42) asked for help in the first year of the program. Of these,

twenty-nine (29) are off the street and the other 13 are prostituting sporadically rather than constantly. For some, cutting back is a stepping stone to ending their involvement in street prostitution. They face big challenges such as finding safe and affordable housing, leaving abusive boyfriends, overcoming addictions, developing positive self-esteem, and getting help for mental and physical health conditions.

"I like to ask the question: Is it time to try quitting? This program provides individuals with alternatives and opportunities to leave prostitution behind and experience hopefulness and success in their lives. I believe that hope leads to possibility, and that leads to change," says JoAnn McCartney, C.O.A.R.S.E. Diversion Program Coordinator.

OV Staff

C COARSE

C.O.A.R.S.E.

It scored right away with me by being the smooth, fine-grained sort, not the **coarse**, flaky, dry-on-the-outside rubbish full of chunks of gut and gristle to testify to its authenticity.

KINGSLEY AMIS

Creating Options Aimed at Reducing Sexual Exploitation

The C.O.A.R.S.E. Prostitution Diversion Program has two primary goals:

1. To help sexually exploited adults end their involvement in street prostitution, reduce the possibility of a criminal record and make positive choices for their future.
2. To provide a new tool for the police, the legal community and the justice system to address prostitution-related offenses in the justice system.

How the C.O.A.R.S.E. works:

- The Edmonton Police Service members charge a woman with a prostitution-related summary conviction offense and inform her about the diversion program.
- The person decides if she is ready to make a change and contacts JoAnn McCartney. They work out a plan to address the immediate reasons for turning to prostitution. (For example: homelessness, addictions, abusive boyfriend/pimp, short of money for basic needs, mental health conditions).
- The woman does some of the research for her plan so that she is invested in making the changes to end her involvement.
- The case plan is presented to the Crown Prosecutors' Office for approval. The case plan is treated like an Adult Alternative Measures' program. If the woman completes her plan, the charges are withdrawn or there is a reduced court-imposed penalty.
- One condition is that she refrain from prostitution while she is on the plan. She must keep in contact with JoAnn and actively participate in the programs she has chosen.
- The length of the average plan is two (2) months.

How many women have asked for help since the program began in Jan. 2002?

- Forty-two women (42) asked for help
- Twenty-nine (29) are completely off Edmonton streets, and the other 13 are prostituting sporadically rather than constantly.

What are the characteristics of women asking for help?

- The average age is 32, the youngest is 18 and the oldest is 51.
- 33 had a history in prostitution longer than 6 months; 5 had recently turned to prostitution
- 16 are Caucasian, 13 have treaty status, 10 are Metis, 3 identified as "other"

What are the major barriers they experience at the time of arrest?

- 18 had no stable housing; 10 stayed with friends or family
- 17 reported addictions as their biggest barrier; 13 reported poverty; 11 have identified/diagnosed mental health issues and reported difficulty accessing appropriate services.

What are some of the hopeful stories?

■ A woman who had always had a mainstream job developed a medical condition which affected her work and lead to unemployment. She did not know where to turn for help or support when her savings ran out, and was too ashamed to approach her family or church. She had seen stories of prostitution on TV, and thought she could try it to get short-term cash. Her first 'customer' was an undercover police officer. She was referred to COARSE, and within days had obtained SFI and was taking a computer-training course. She has been employed full time ever since.

■ A young woman with a severe addiction to cocaine wanted off the street and out of prostitution. She needed a lengthy rehab to assist her. There was an opening in the Salvation Army women's program, but she had no money to pay for it. She even approached her MLA to see if he could find funding but he was unsuccessful. A phone call from the diversion coordinator to a COARSE partner during their first meeting accessed the funds and the woman was in the rehab within 3 days. She completed the 90-day program and has not returned to prostitution.

■ A very entrenched young woman who was an alcoholic and had engaged in prostitution daily for 5 years agreed to attend rehab and life skills training to try to break her behavior patterns. She successfully completed both of them, and now attends college taking upgrading. Her goal is to work in the medical field. After completing her plan, she did resort to prostitution on a few occasions. We see this as a reduction from her past behaviour of prostituting all night every night. The Diversion Program provided a stepping-stone to success. Completing college and getting a job will help her fully end her involvement in prostitution.

■ One woman created a plan where she would deal with all her mental health and physical health issues. She was homeless, had a sleep disorder, had two diagnosed mental health conditions, had a blood clot and needed surgery for an injury. She was seeing a G.P., a surgeon, and a psychiatrist,

all of whom had put her on a variety of medications. During the course of her plan, she found housing, arranged to have her medications stabilized and co-ordinated so that they did not counteract each other, and dealt with the blood clot and surgery issues.

■ Another young woman agreed to attend school to upgrade her education. She made it from grade 3 level to grade 8 before her abusive boyfriend forced her to quit. Because of him she lost her apartment and fled the city to hide in a shelter. She did not complete her plan, but her progress was documented for the court so that the judge could take it into consideration. She stays in touch with the Diversion Coordinator, and still plans to return to go back to school when she feels it is safe. She has not returned to prostitution.

Partners:

The Crown Prosecutor's Office of Alberta Justice, and PAAFE are the lead partners. Some of the community resources utilized by women on the plan include Crossroads, DECSA Transitions II, Catholic Social Services, Metis Child and Family Services, the Boyle McCauley Health Centre, the Salvation Army, Elizabeth Fry Society, Bissell Centre and others. Alberta Human Resources and Employment programs and AADAC services have also assisted women.

Funding:

The program is funded by the Federal Department of Justice through the Voluntary Sector Initiative. The City of Edmonton Community Services is assisting with evaluation services. Alberta Justice, the Solicitor General Prevention Programs and the Edmonton Police Service provide research data and assistance.

Prostitution Awareness and Action Foundation of Edmonton (PAAFE)



He Says...

Adaptation is a tangled tale told through a movie-within-a-movie. Screenwriter Charlie Kaufman, hot off his success with the film *Being John Malkovich*, is hired to adapt "The Orchid Thief" to the big screen. It's a real non-fiction book by journalist Susan Orlean (Meryl Streep.) The book follows her through Florida swamps as she attempts to find the story behind John Laroche. Laroche (played by Chris Cooper) is an enigmatic man obsessed for the moment by rare orchids. Orlean is fascinated by the unlimited passion he puts into his obsession and longs to feel even a fraction of it for anything in her life. The movie alternates between what happened three years ago leading up to the writing of the book and the present as Kaufman fights to complete his screenplay within his deadline.

While the book is rife with interesting characters and insight, it lacks a clear structure making it incredibly difficult for Kaufman to develop it a working screenplay. He finally overcomes this by writing himself into the story and making it about his struggle to portray it. His desire to be true to the source material while creating a movie brimming with fresh ideas goes against all the formulas of successful moviemaking set out by Hollywood. The whole thing flies in the face of convention creating a strong anti-establishment motif.

Kaufman creates an unsavory caricature of himself expertly played by Nicholas Cage. He also creates Donald a fictitious twin brother (also played by Cage.) It's a pleasure seeing Cage break out of the action/adventure genre and the role of the tubby brothers give his acting skills a well deserved workout. Charlie is of course brilliant but socially inept and filled with doubt. He can barely talk to women while Donald, a dim-witted vulgar man, has no trouble flirting with scoring the ladies. While Charlie is losing his mind trying to put anything down on paper his agent hounds him for at least a first draft. Meanwhile Donald takes a weekend seminar on screenwriting and in no time is finished a paint-by-numbers Hollywood script about a serial killer with multiple personalities. It sells for huge money and Donald finds himself the toast of the town. Any psychiatrist would probably have a field day trying to decipher the meaning behind the double character but for those without a Ph.D., it just makes for good viewing.

Watching Cage literally sweating over his work—absolutely stumped where to go next—is a guilty pleasure. Anyone who has ever tried to write anything meaningful can understand his desperation and despair when the words won't flow. His self-loathing and doubt fills the screen. His fat ass, balding head and his desire to better himself become vehicles, driving the movie on. As Charlie comes to grips with how to write the script, he begins to see the truth behind all his longing and his failure up until now. Buried within the plot is a revealing look at the nature of passion and the lengths people will adapt to find love. It also allows a fascinating peek at the creative process of a writer.

As with most semi-autobiographies the line between fact and fantasy is intentionally blurred by Kaufman in *Adaptation*. By giving Donald credits at the beginning of the film and using scenes on the set of *Being John Malkovich*, you can't help but wonder what, if any of it, is real. But in the end you walk away from it thinking, not simply numbed by high-tech special effects and car chases. That alone makes it worthwhile. The chaotic nature of the film as it weaves in and out of the "present" and "past" can be disconcerting and there are times when the movie tries too hard to be smart.

It is, however, a highly creative and original film. It's not as funny or weird as *Being John Malkovich*, but it seems much deeper and more profound.

Phil Duperron

FILM **F**

A film is a petrified fountain of thought.

JEAN COCTEAU

ADAPTATION[S]

She Says...

Adaptation opens with the disembodied voice of Charlie Kaufman (Nicholas Cage) droning through an anxious litany of his failings. His self-esteem is as downtrodden as the opening credits, lower-case and cringing at the bottom of the black screen. It's the voice of any 21st century North American, a pathetic negotiation with materialism's hollow values, its razor-edged aspirations that cut back on you with feral blindness when they smell weakness. This is a sprawling, heady road trip of a movie, about quests and holy grails and why, God why, something spoke to your soul and became worth pursuing in the first place.

A unique perspective, the journey most observed, is that of screenwriter Charlie who, based on his success with the screenplay "Being John Malkovich," has been commissioned to adapt the book "The Orchid Thief." Also created by Spike Jonze, there are cool behind-the-biz passages, allowing you to feel like a fly on the wall (John Malkovich having an eloquent, commanding hissy-fit on set; Kathryn Keener playing Boggle in Kaufman's backyard). One helplessly considers the different type of sweat and tears involved in movie making and, as a famous producer once said: "In the beginning, there was the word - you can't have a movie without a script". The particular anxiety that is a writer's facing a blank page is illustrated with stunning craft and perception. An amazing montage accompanies Charlie's creative tempest when it finally arrives; then we watch it turn ugly as anxiety and doubt suddenly throttle him (Darwin, first imagined as a donnish scribe is later seen punching Charlie furiously when his inspiration careens violently, trying to make a landing).

Other quests belong to Susan Orlean (Meryl Streep), the author of the book, and John Laroche, the orchid thief himself (played brilliantly by Chris Cooper). Cooper inhabits this role, the eccentric collector of rare orchids, as well as several other abandoned obsessions, with such believable pathos and wit that I kept wondering why he isn't more famous (he also was the

vicious, homophobic military father in *American Beauty*). Beside him, Meryl Streep seems even more mannered and self-conscious than usual, but that's okay, she's very watchable, especially playing a New York intellectual - basically, herself.

Charlie has a twin brother Donnie (generated by special effects that might make Peter Jackson muse "hmmm... clever bastards") Donnie also wants to be a screenwriter and seems, in comparison, far more integrated, honest and accessible than his angst-ridden, self-punishing twin. Charlie lives entirely in his head, the whole of his love life a solitary experience. There's a particular scene of frozen, aching anguish when Charlie rises from his bed, his hunched, naked body illuminated by the light of his computer screen - the isolation seems to crush him. Again, he's had fantastical intimacy with a woman he's fallen apart in front of, projecting an austerity of judgment that had nothing to do with her. All the lighting in Kaufman's house is defeated, reproachful, neglecting. Ironically, it's the gratingly clueless Donnie who provides a cinematic epiphany worth the price of any admission.

Adaptation successfully balances heavy, engaging themes; the concept of adaptation itself is explored as John Laroche speaks lovingly of his orchids' evolution. The relationship between flower and insect is organic testimony of helpless attraction, pursuit, the ineffable pull of a soulmate. The author of the book is moving toward her subject, Donnie toward creative achievement, the orchid thief toward honesty and a redeeming emotional thaw, Charlie toward his genitals (they've sort of turned him into a newt, but he gets a bit better).

The movie has, to fling a Leonard Maltin phrase, "jarring shifts in tone", but it's all part of the fabric. The current of realism is strong enough that the center seems to hold. I can just see Kathryn Keener, in the setting sun, turning over the timer one last time, the Boggle letters exploding and falling; in the dying light, they'll search and search for words.

Keyna Laurence

It's the voice of any 21st century North American, a pathetic negotiation with materialism's hollow values, its razor-edged aspirations that cut back on you with feral blindness when they smell weakness.

POETRY:

Mound in the Snow

It's cold outside
So very cold
The wind beats upon
my face
I keep moving from
place to place
Trying to find a place
to stay for the night
Every place is full
Security just chased
me from the parkade
I've no money for a
coffee

I'm cold, so very cold
The night never ends
People walk past the
mound in the snow
The news on TV have
just mentioned that a
homeless man was found
lying in the snow.

Betty Nordin

Chasing Rainbows

Forever chasing rainbows,
fruitlessly chasing rainbows
Searching for I know not
what, forever searching
Trying to fill a void
somewhere deep
within my soul
Feeling lost and all alone,
chasing rainbows to
make me whole

The emptiness within grew
and devoured
my sense of being
Women, alcohol and drugs
couldn't fill the void, but I
kept trying.

The void kept gnawing and
devouring me from the inside
I ran. I hid. No matter what I
did, it was always by my side.

Sick and tired of chasing
rainbows that never
materialized
Despair dropping from every
pore, thoughts of death kept
me mesmerized
Terror filled fear seething
through my heart,
dominating my mind

Chasing elusive rainbows, a
dark consuming void is all I
find

With foreboding I survey my
life, repelled at what I saw, I
try to hide
Somewhere within a feeling
explodes, loneliness seems to
say, "here I abide"

This wretched life I lead,
always chasing rainbows in
my cloud-filled mind
Heart and soul filled with
loneliness, despair and
hopelessness, nothing
left inside

Chasing rainbows, fruitlessly
chasing rainbows that
exist in my mind
Rainbows that disappear like
the morning mist, loneliness
is all I find

Desperately my mind cries for
something that I can't feel or
see

My existence wasted chasing
rainbows that disappear
before me.

Patches

What Love Says:

I am a mountain
not a prairie
laid out as far as the eye can see
beauty passive before you
easily explored
each step no different
than the one before -
taking you nowhere.

I am a mountain.

If you hope to know me
mean it.
There is nothing in the beginning
that resembles the end.

If you set out
careless, laughing
confident that what you see,
small enough to fit in your eye,
is the flatness of simplicity
and the pretty, distant whiteness
is taken to be, "Oh! the snow!
how lovely!"
You will not survive.
I am a mountain.
Somewhere on the way
before you even leave
the forest behind
for the heights and rocks
you will falter
your feet blistered, your muscles whining.
You might convince yourself -
"the forest is the mountain,"
build a fire, unpack your lunch
rest your feet, then turn and head back home.

I will watch you from above.

But if you set out knowing:
no heart that did not hold
in the first steps
the seriousness of the journey,
no mind that did not see the distant white
and already feel the cold,
no body that did not set its pace
for challenge and distance,
no soul that did not carry
in it, burning like a flame,
the desire to succeed,
has ever felt the glory
of the world spread out
beneath its feet,

I will meet you there.

Natasha Laurence

Winter

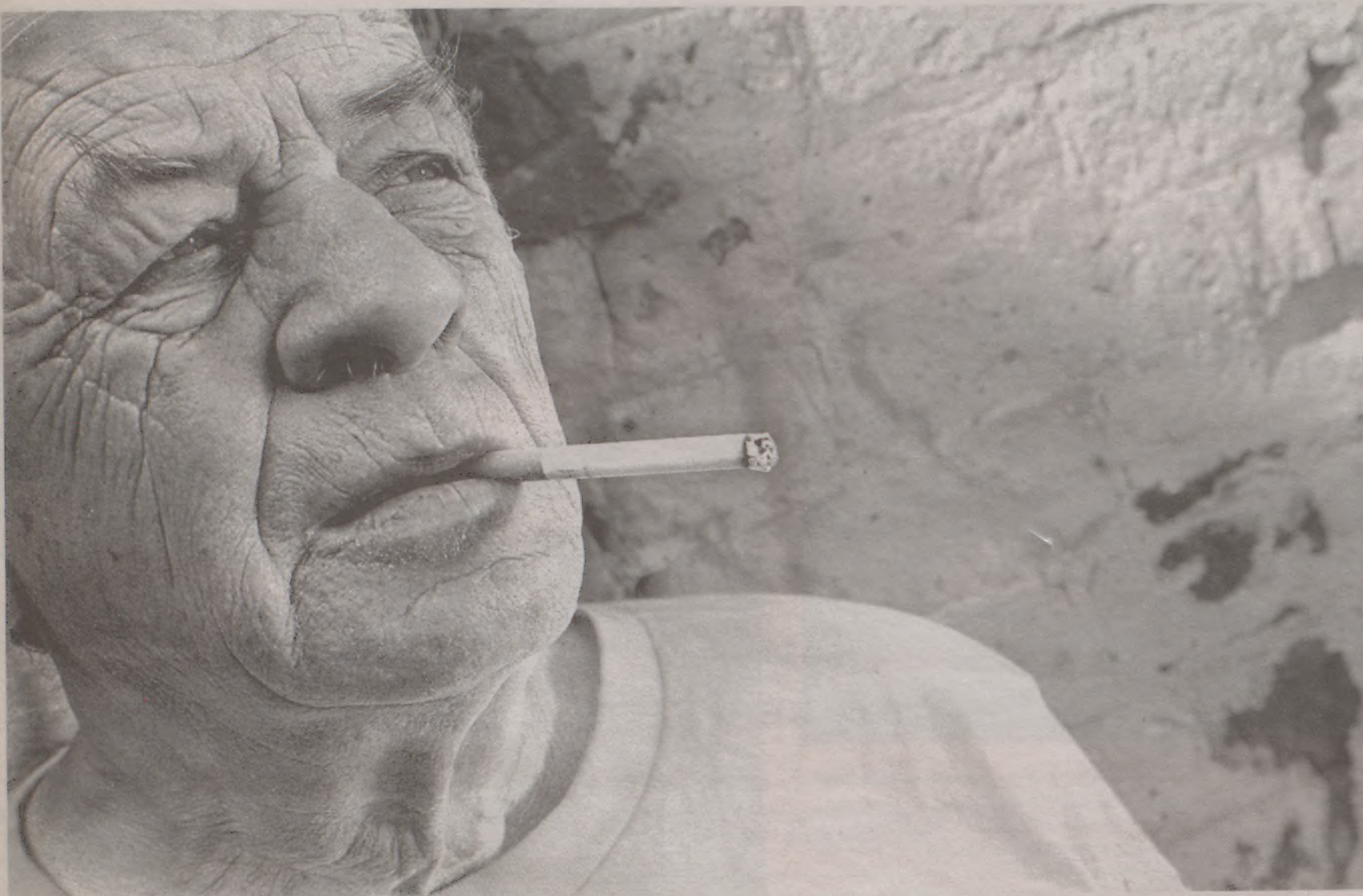
Trees covered with frost
and snow
Children's snow angels
everywhere
People skating on the
frozen lake
Children sliding down
the hills
Snow covers the dirty
condoms and rigs that
are lying around
on the ground
Snow shines like diamonds
everywhere
My, winter is beautiful

Betty Nordin

P POETRY

Poetry is the impish
attempt to paint the color
of the wind.

MAXWELL BODENHEIM

RADICAL **R**

There is no such thing as a moderate in the civil-rights movement; everyone is a **radical**. The difference is whether or not one is all rhetoric or relevant.

WHITNEY MOORE YOUNG JR

RADICAL CHANGE

The NYPD's Finest

On November 22, 2002, Officer Eduardo Delacruz, an eight-year rank and file veteran of the NYPD -- an outfit already undeniably distinguished for sacrifice and duty in the public interest -- was working NYPD's "Homeless Outreach Unit," rousting homeless people out of a New York shopping district. Retailers and businesses in New York, as here, are always seeking scapegoats to account for shortfalls in expected revenues, never mind the economy. We're not here to evaluate the efficacy of such extraordinary efforts to salvage some retailers' disappointing holiday season bottom line.

When he came across 44-year-old Stephen Neil sleeping in a Manhattan parking garage, Officer Delacruz refused to arrest him for trespassing because he knew there was nowhere else for this homeless guy to go. The New York Times quoted the devout Catholic, husband, and father telling his superiors: "I told you before, I'm not going to do it. I won't arrest an undomiciled person."

NYC has always ranked right beside San Francisco and Atlanta as the most egregious examples of local police departments selectively enforcing the now-ubiquitous, so-

Charity,
justice,
strangers,
kindness,
police officers
and homeless
people, and
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ness can
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cal change.
Perhaps it's
multiplying
even now.

called "quality of life" laws that criminalize homeless people for survival activities like sleeping, so the fact that Officer Delacruz broke ranks to act from his heart was remarkable in itself. And no matter how we might characterize his action, most would find agreement that disobeying a direct order -- right or wrong -- required no small amount of courage.

Experience tells us cops aren't likely to be very compassionate toward homeless people. But Delacruz was pretty remarkable. According to *Newsday*, this policeman carried old blankets and clothing in his car to distribute to street people, and enjoyed reminding the other officers that Jesus Christ was homeless, too.

But because the 37-year-old Officer Delacruz held the simple moral conviction that arresting the Mr. Neil was the wrong thing to do, and because this simple moral conviction was in direct conflict with his superior's orders, Delacruz was immediately placed on 30 days suspension without pay... during the holidays.

"He's a good guy -- he's got a heart," asserted one of his homeless supporters. "He knows it's not a crime to be homeless, and the NYPD should be ashamed of itself."

Here we could ponder that perhaps it was that fateful September morning when New York's towering monuments to capitalism were rendered to a smoking hole for the newscamera's terrorized benefit, or maybe it was those bagpipes balefully moaning "Amazing Grace" in the funeral season that followed, or maybe it was just the moonlight that particular New York winter evening -- whatever the impetus, it would certainly seem that something rather remarkable happened in Officer Eduardo Delacruz's life as well, something that spoke to the better angels of his nature... some-

thing that made him decide that jailing homeless people for being homeless wasn't the right thing to do, orders and consequences be damned.

Call it an act of conscience.

We call it radical change.

And that was a pretty remarkable story, but the story didn't end there.

On December 24, the Associated Press reported that a group of 30 homeless and formerly homeless people presented Officer Delacruz, his wife, and their five children with a check in the amount of \$3000.00. AP also reported the three grand came mostly from recycling cans and bottles, panhandling and, yes, lots of it came from homeless people's welfare checks.

"We just wanted to thank him by contributing however we could," explained one of the homeless donors, "And a lot of us gave quarters, nickels and dimes."

And who knows? Maybe Officer Delacruz's NYPD buddies even sweetened a few beggars' cups to help the effort. Officers will do that sometimes, anyway. It was the holidays, after all.

It certainly isn't like we can say we've never seen a cop be compassionate and kind toward homeless people.

At least, not anymore. And that's why Officer Eduardo Delacruz's story is so remarkable.

Charity, justice, strangers, kindness, police officers and homeless people, and how a single act of kindness can multiply creating radical change.

Perhaps it's multiplying even now.

Chance Martin
San Francisco
Street Sheet



My Big Fat Greek Appetite

Climbing over the Great Wall of Chinese Cookery and landing in dim sum is quite the diner's treat, at least that is what my friend and I found out at Mirama Dining and Lounge. We were surrounded by ten wagon-wheeling waitresses who would frequently push their food wagons up to our table for two like an army ready to infiltrate our dim sum taste buds by asking us if we were interested in trying the various food items offered from their wagons.

There, in front of our eyes, was a wagon full of deep fried pork dumplings selling for the easy price of \$2.50, sticky rice wrapped in a giant dark green leaf for \$3.10. Deep fried sesame seed balls delicious to the core, and, of course, as an additional helping for two diners, steamed shrimp wrapped in a ball of rice dough.

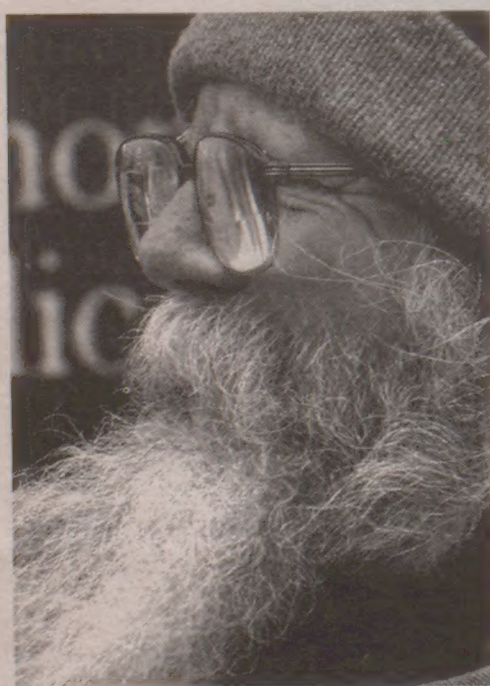
These items and 46 others on the menu are some of the very delicious delights my friend and I had the pleasure of dining on. I would highly recommend them to anyone who has ever eaten the finest from the Far East.

One thing is assured: these waitresses, whom you feel are ambushing you at times with the sales of their delightful cookery may never leave you alone, as they say.

On the other hand, the advantages of being stalked by the armies of waitresses leave you knowing you're never being ignored and that your food will always be warm whenever you need some.

On the Big Fat Greek Appetite rating scale, I give the Mirama 4 rice paddies out of 5 - Service like a runaway train. Don't even think of trying to stop those wagons--they just keep coming! Definitely recommended for any dim sum taste bud.

John Zapantis



Pure Chaos

Anyone that has notions of moving in December or January should give their head a shake - twice. You don't realize how much you have accumulated 'til

you start packing.

Juggling the volunteering, writing and vending for Our Voice took its toll on me mentally and physically. Played out and irritable at night. I was spreading my mind and body too thin.

I finally found a decent place to live on January 2nd. I moved my belongings slowly into my humble abode a bit at a time. Everything was squeezed into my bachelor apartment.

Fortunately that situation is going to be rectified at the end of the month when a larger unit becomes available across the hall.

Finally, a place to call home - no booze or illegal drugs allowed. If this rule is broken a 48 hour notice is given to vacate the building.

I'll start sorting out belongings and donate them to Casual Labour

At the Bissell Centre and Urban Manor.

I am going to slack off on obligations and appointments for a while so I can get re-focused on furthering my education.

I need to respect my boundaries and my limitations. Take more time to relax, play and learn how to say, "NO!!"

Kevin Fox



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